The Stars and Stripes

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THE DAY SHIFT

The small boy (so the story goes) had exhausted all his all-day-suckers but one, and was observing it thoughtfully when the inquisitive old gentleman came along.

"Why don't you eat it?" asked the inquisitive old gentleman.

"Oh," said the small boy, "I get more fun out of just thinking about eating it—and, anyhow, I tasted it and it's sour."

The small boy was wise beyond his years, and he also had the advantage of forewarning.

Stating a generalization, always a bold thing to do, realization seldom comes up to expectations. The first cigarette we smoke after swearing off for two weeks doesn't justify the amount of expectations we devoted to it. The first bicycle of our youth was found to be a fallible instrument subject to punctures and other complaints. The nectar of the gods itself, if obtainable at the leading cafés, would probably prove to be a liquid which left a bad headache the next morning. And so—we look forward to getting home. What does it mean?

Family, kisses, handclasps and tears—a bed with sheets, a bathroom, beefsteak (home style), apple pie, stiff collars and suspenders. And then—

Back to the old job, probably. Or another one like it. Eight o'clock to 12; 1 o'clock to 5.

Tedious? Well, yes, it does pall after a year of mud and marching, of danger and adventure, of cooties, exercise and open air. And it may make a man a little restless.

The worst of it is that a good many people see this restlessness. The alarmist, for instance, sees it.

"Unrest!" he shouts. "The boys aren't satisfied!"

"I'll fix it," says the reformer. "We'll appoint a committee and get an appropriation."

And he adds with astuteness: "It's their state of mind. We must prepare it for their home-coming."

It's a state of mind, all right—a perfectly natural reaction to a set of physical circumstances. And a little dose of time is about the only remedy for it.

PUBLIC INFORMATION?

In an article which sets forth the elaborate and extraordinarily successful propaganda work done by America for the undoing of the Germans, Brother George Creel, recently resigned chairman of the Committee on Public Information, feels obliged to heighten its importance by inducing the impression that it was no military victory which the Allied Armies achieved on November 11.

By way of a premise he says:

"On the day that the Germans signed the armistice, accepting defeat as overwhelming as their ambitions had been colossal, they had two million men under arms on the Western front alone. *This army was well equipped with supplies and munitions, and behind it still stretched line after line almost impregnable by reason of natural strength and military science. . . . Nothing is more apparent than that a defensive warfare could have been waged for months, taking a tremendous toll in Allied and American lives.*"

The italics are ours. The facts are Mr. Creel's. They will be read with considerable surprise and amusement by Marshal Foch and members of the German High Command, to whom they may come as news.

HOW LONG WAS IT?

There is a popular superstition in the A.E.F. that the first comers to France have been here some 22 months. There is an even more popular superstition, held by all single-stripers, that they have been here for periods varying from six to nearly 12 months. Both are wrong. Every man in the A.E.F. has been here for ages and ages.

Not in the strict arithmetic of the calendar. Not in what he has suffered or failed to suffer. Not in the pangs of homesickness that are assailing him now harder than they ever did before in all his military or pre-military life.

Not in any or all of these things, but in the great things that have happened, the earth-shaking that has just ceased, the period the A.E.F. has lived through is a millennium. It can be read for exactly that if one will look forward a thousand years and picture to himself a contemporary 300-page history of the world. How much of it will be devoted to the period from 700 to 1100 A.D.? How much to the years 1815 to 1861? And how much to the tiny span from 1914 to 1918?

Four years, as the earth travels around the sun. But are they not likely to get rather more attention than the four years, say, from 1891 to 1895?

THE LEAVETAKING

There is always a touch of sadness, declared sage Dr. Samuel Johnson, about doing a thing for the last time. Only, he added, you have to be sure it is the last time.

There would be nothing noticeably sad, for instance, in the last meal with a messkit if demobilization came unexpectedly in the middle of the afternoon. But if a man knows beforehand that he is eating the last meal he will probably ever eat out of a messkit, that foolish something called sentiment will bob up into his throat and all but block the passage of the last army bean—even while he cusses and remarks that the last bucket of dishwater will probably be as greasy as the first was, even though the water has been changed.

There will be several last things for the three-quarters of the A.E.F. that is left, just as there were for the one-quarter that is gone. The last day in France, for instance. And the last glimpse of France from the transport rail.

"I can't very well tell you what it was like to see the coastline slipping away behind me," writes one of the lucky 25 per cent. "I can't remember very well myself—I was in a daze for several hours after I got on the boat. But when I looked back, and remembered that the greatest bit of history in my life was going out of it, and remembered the good times I had had and the bad times, and the mud, and third class cars, and no class cars, and little boys that bummed cigarettes, and little girls that bummed chewing gum, and grown-ups that took it out in sous, just as they did around Camp ———— here at home—well, I didn't say anything, but I wished them all good luck in my heart. And if there hadn't been so many fellows around me I should have saluted. I looked at the others, and I saw they felt the same way."

STINGLESS

The old order changeth. Nothing is so good but what it can be improved upon. Even the old Army standby ballads are not *safe from refinement, though* up to now even the most soft-boiled of the A.E.F. had never mentioned such a possibility.

For instance, on page 43 of the Y.M.C.A.'s recent publication, "Popular Songs of the A.E.F."—which, by the way, contains all the favorite O.D. lyrics from "Good Morning, Mr. Zip, Zip, Zip," to "God Save the King"—there appears a selection, the music of which appears familiar, albeit the words have a foreign ring:

Hail! Hail! the gang's all here,
What the deuce do we care, what the deuce do we care,
Hail! Hail! we're full of cheer,
What the deuce do we care, Bill!

Next thing somebody will suggest that there might be room for reformation even in "Home, Boys, Home," or "You're in the Army Now," and more idols will be shattered.

But what the deuce do we care?

FREE FOR NOTHING

The recent decision to restrict free distribution by auxiliary societies will correct a peculiar evil which has grown up in the A.E.F. Our canteen service—our general source of supply of all necessities and extras which weren't forthcoming through the supply sergeant and his twin in philanthropy, the mess sergeant—has not been so satisfactory as it might have been in the past. This may have been gathered by any casual listener to any one of several million discussions on the subject in the last eighteen months.

In these discussions two factors were nearly always mentioned—high prices and the suggestion of an air of condescension at some of the places where extras were obtainable. The man who stood in line 15 minutes waiting an opportunity to spend half a day's pay for two packs of cigarettes, a cake of chocolate and a bar of soap felt that he had a right to be indignant. And the fact that the next day someone came around and said, "Here's a pack of cigarettes 'with the compliments of the American people,'" didn't mitigate the grouch.

None of the million and a quarter soldiers will ever have anything but grateful memories for those who passed out refreshments to the men as they went into the line and who waited with cigarettes and coffee for the exhausted and the wounded as they came out. And no buffeted casual who ever sought a kindly paymaster over France will forget the favors done for him.

But the fighting is over now. We're all getting paid with greater regularity, and we're among the best paid soldiers in the world (even if that isn't saying much). About all we can ask is a fair opportunity to buy what we want at a fair price. Most certainly we are not objects of charity.

LEST WE FORGET

Mrs. Gertrude Bostrom, of Santa Cruz, California, mother of an American killed in battle, has received a letter from the German soldier in whose arms he died. Written at Schaufenberg bei Achen on October 13, the letter said:

I will communicate briefly the sad news that your son, Walter, fell in battle on the 2nd of October, 1918. I myself gave him assistance, but he fell asleep in my arms and was buried by German comrades in Wenn Wade, near the village of Tonel, Northern France. If it is possible for you to answer the letter, even if it is not until after the war, it would give me sincere pleasure.

With heartfelt sympathy for your fallen son, enclosing two letters and a photograph he left, from

HANS PERN.

Every once in a while something happens which, to the great annoyance of statisticians and propagandists, reminds us all that the late war was a mighty clash of peoples which, unfortunately, involved human beings.

THE POINT OF VIEW

The work of the Peace Conference will be strong and good in proportion as the statesmen work not for their own little hour, but recognize, rather, that their most important constituents are the generations—the countless generations—yet unborn.

Back in the States, that entertaining dean of American journalists, Henry Watterson, of Louisville, has just been chosen president of the new society to oppose the League of Nations. At the same time, Marse Henry is publishing on the side in The Saturday Evening Post a series of articles entitled "Looking Backward."

Can this be a coincidence?

A. B.

A great American university had 6,257 of its sons in the Army. It is a noble record. Here is their official tabulation:

Major general	1
Brigadier general	8
Colonel	35
Lieutenant colonel	49
Major	247
Captain	909
First lieutenant	1,234
Second lieutenant	1,266
Candidates	210
Non-coms, etc.	2,293
Etc.	

Discovered: A new name for a private.

The Army's Poets

ENDORSING AN APPEAL

In a letter to President Wilson, the Prince of Bosnia asks the President to watch over the interests of Bosnia and Herzegovina. He desires only the possession of his estate usurped by the Hapsburgs. He says that he is obliged to work in order to eat.—News Dispatch.

Wilson! Thou judge of all disputes
Within this world's arena,
Take pity on a hungry prince
Who daily groweth leaner,
Him who was Prince of Bosnia
And of Herzegovina.

Ere Bosnia became a pawn
In war's colossal gambit
The Prince he had a cushy job.
As near as I can lamp it:
And work (that low and menial thing)—
He never did a dambit.

But read his piteous story in
The Paris New York Herald!
The haughty Hapsburg sits upon
The throne his flight imperiled:
The Hohenzollern gets an edge
On beer the Bosnians barrelled!

Wilson! Give ear to this appeal
And do not lightly flout it:
Hunt up a well-fed workless job
And give this grand old scout it:
And—I'm a casual, too, so make
It two while you're about it.

Morris G. Bishop, 1st Lt., Inf

THE TELEGRAM

Across the bunched and bundled sheafs of white
That shift and mill and flow
In inky flatness through the cluttered room
There darts a yellow glow—

A small, dynamic square that waves and shrieks,
Demands attention, orderlies that rush,
Initials, spindles, burning words and pins—
Departs, and leaves a vast and papered hush.

S. V. J.

SICK OF IT?

Sick of thhe feel of khaki,
Sick of my gun,
Sick of the sight of squads left and squads right—
We're never done.
Sick of the whole bloomin' army—
Generals down.
Want to walk west with my thumbs in my vest,
Back home in town

Want to get back to the girlie
Kiss her again.
Hang up my hat in a neat little flat—
She can say when.
Sick of the smell of billets
Sick of the chow.
Want to quit France and put on long pants—
Want to go now

What's that! Mail! I got two letters!
Gimme 'em, quick!
From mother and dad: "If you're living we're glad."
Tell me to stick!
Another one, yes—from girlie!
What's it about!
"It's tough, but it's war, and you're worth waiting for."
Guess I'll snap out!

Buck

ODE TO MY RED CROSS GIRL

It isn't because your savory pies
Are the sweetest I ever had;
It isn't because the light in your eyes
Has the power of making me glad;
It isn't because your parlor of rest
Is filled with melodious cheer;
It isn't because your cots are the best
Of any we get over here.
The reason I'll see you again and again—
Though I'm not quite so sure it will please—
But after each meal, when I say "Combien?"
Is the way that you say, "Swoss on dees."

Howard A. Herty, Sgt. Maj., Inf.

"SMILER"

(Dedicated to the memory of Lawrence C. Yerges, fighting with the 26th Division, killed in action in October, 1918.)

They called him "Smiler" over there,
And we who knew him know
Just what his sunshine meant to them
When days were black and nights aglow
With bombs that blew their works away
And men to bits. His smile was glad
In face of death—a snatch of heaven
Out there in hell where men went mad.

"He lost his life," the people say;
But we who knew him know
He gave his life, his friends, his work,
His hopes laid by—the first to go—
He gave his all that we might be
As free to live and work and play
As in the days before we knew
Why Christ ascended Calvary.

Where poppies grow his body lies,
But we who knew him know
Not guns of men nor fangs of beasts
Can o'er destroy the living glow
Of love his smile spread 'long the path
Of us, who walked a way with him
And basked awhile in sunshine rare
And learned to smile, though eyes were dim.

Charme Seeds.

FRIEND STEVEDORE ON JAZZ BANDS

This military music from a military band
Sure sets the home folks prancin', and it gets an awful hand—
(At least it did before I left the well-known U.S.A. And things like that, I s'pose, ain't changed since I got shipped away);
But talk about your brass bands goin' nuts on soldier tunes—
You ought to see these people here on Sunday afternoons
Come flockin' from the country round, from church and small café,
And when our Jazz Band hits the square, that mob is here to stay!

I know back home they makes a fuss and thinks it's mighty fine
To see a pile o' soldiers come a-hikin' down the line
With bands a-playin' martial airs and flags a-flyin' free
And all the ranks a-linin' straight as far as they can see;
But talk about your cheerin' mobs and folks that eats parades—
These people here can trim our folks and give 'em cards and spades!
They ain't been used to military music every day,
And when the Jazz Band hits the town they throw their jobs away.

The same, I guess, holds good for all, in peace time or in war.
This music stuff can get a crowd that nothin' got before—
You've seen 'em quiet wild strikers with a well-directed hose?
Well, just soak a crowd in music; you can lead it by the nose.
With the battle hymns it's fightin', at the ballads it will sigh,
A lively waltz will make it dance, a dirge can make it cry—
These people here are just the same as those we left back there,
But they've had four years of fightin'—and no Jazz Band in the square.

It goes the same with nations as it does with those here mobs—
You feeds 'em peaceful music and they sticks to peaceful jobs.
But get the Jazz Band started on some bloody Hymn of Hate,
Then Friend Nation gets to rompin' round and busts in someone's gate.
The Kaiser was a man who loved them real disturbin' tunes,
And now the gang that flocked around on Sunday afternoons
Is wond'rin' how they fell so hard for "Watchin' on the Rhine,"
When they might have had their Jazz Bands tunin' up on "Auld Lang Syne."

C. C. S.

POST CARDS

I saw a white thing sticking out
Of his breast pocket. It might be
Something worth while, I thought, and so
I took it. It was post cards, three—
One of a woman, one a kid,
And one, himself, beside a chair
In uniform. The sort they take
Back home at any county fair—
Take them and print them while you wait.

He had a pleasant smile, and looked
Clean; decent, just the sort you meet
Running a little corner store,
Or carrying tools along the street.
I wish I hadn't shot so quick;
But I was pretty sore. You see,
He came close, yelling "Kamerad,"
And then he threw a bomb at me.

Ralph Linton, Col., 149th F.A.

AFTER US, THE TOURISTS!

LAST OF THE M.P.'s

SOMEWHERE in France rests the last of the 308th M.P.'s. Long years ago, when the world war was in progress, this fine body of Military Police left the United States for France. They did their duty faithfully and well, and when the war was over and their division went home, they were left behind, due to some error in moving orders.

Their battalion number was changed a couple of times, so that no one would be able to find them. They continued to serve faithfully, until one after another passed away and was buried by his comrades; at last, only two of them remained; the one on his post in front of the Bourse de Commerce and the one on his beat around the Place de la République.

One day in the year of 1969, a retired general, while reading a book about the world-wide war, happened to think about the 308th M.P.'s, and, after a month of investigation, discovered that the 308th M.P.'s had never left France. Having great influence at the Capitol, he finally obtained permission to send a Secret Service man to France and locate the M.P.'s.

He searched for months and months in every village in France, but could find no trace of them until, at last, he landed in Le Mans; leaving the station on a car bound for the center, and getting off at the Place de la République, stepping from the car, he saw a sight that gladdened his heart.

Near the monument he saw two very aged soldiers standing together; but they wore a strange-looking uniform; on their heads were battered campaign hats with a faded red ribbon around the crowns. Their uniforms were O.D., with wrapped leggins; the left sleeve of the blouse had a double row of gold chevrons from the cuff to the shoulder, and around the arm was a blue brassard with the letters M.P. in red. Each wore a web belt and leather holster in which was an old-fashioned Colt automatic pistol. Under the right arm each carried a sort of wooden club, well polished from long use. Their hair and beards were long and white, the beards reaching nearly to their waists.

Going up to the old veterans, the Secret Service man said: "Would you be so kind as to inform me whether you are members of the original 308th M.P.'s or where I could find them?" The old veterans stared at him for a moment and then said, "No compree." Being a good Secret Service agent and, therefore, able to speak French, he asked the same question in French. Both veterans answered in the affirmative. The agent then proceded to tell them that he had been sent to France to find them and take them home, as he had the sailing orders and transportation for them.

The shock was too much for them, after waiting patiently for so many years. When it came it was more than they could stand, and, clasping each other in their arms, they sank to the ground, unconscious, and never recovered.

They were buried three days later with great ceremony and all military honor. The citizens of Le Mans erected a monument beside the one of Chanzy in the Place de la République and then went into mourning for a long time.

Thus ended the career of a noble body of men who served their country faithfully, if not gloriously. Some day you may go to heaven and I would not be surprised if you found them on guard at the pearly gates waiting to look over your pass or credentials and stamp them; also to confiscate any extra cognac you may have taken with you to cheer you on your way and make a steep path easier to climb.

BY ONE OF THEM.

TOUGH BUT TRUE

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIES:

Will you please answer the following:

Is a man who came to France as a member of a Regular Army division, saw action in two campaigns with it, and was then transferred to a classification depot, whence he was assigned to a detachment such as the one I am in (and which does not sport any divisional insignia), entitled to wear the insignia of his old division?

A. L. W.,
Junior Section,
Combat Officers' Depot.

[A man must be with his division to wear its insignia. If he is with a special unit he must wear insignia of that unit. If the unit has no insignia he is out of luck.—EDITOR.]

HEADLINES OF A YEAR AGO

From THE STARS AND STRIPES of March 29, 1918.

TAKE AS YOUR MASCOT A FRENCH WAR ORPHAN — Every Company, or Even Smaller Unit, in A.E.F. Has Chance to Adopt and Maintain Its Own Waif—Just Name Your Choice—500 Francs Will Support Child for Year—American Soldiers Can Play Godfather at Prodigious Outlay of Four Cents a Month Through Stars and Stripes Plan.

MORTALLY HURT, SERGEANT HELPS WOUNDED MATES — General Pershing Cables D.S.C. Man's Family Personal Tribute — French Given New Cross—Major and Lieutenant Are Honored for Gallant Share in American Raid —22 More Win Decoration—Medical Department Well Represented in Second List of A.E.F. Heroes.

BALL GAME STAGED WITHIN HUN RANGE—Doughboys Play Full Nine Innings Despite Shrapnel Shower.

PIES AND DOUGHNUTS FOR MEN UP FRONT—Salvation Army Provides for More Than Spiritual Comfort.

LIQUOR BATTLE HAS ALL SIDES IN BAD TANGLE—New York Wets and Drys Struggle in Cobweb of Amendments.

TRIER, GERMANY

IT is snowing—just a few flakes to indicate the whirling currents of air, but not enough to blanket the ground. It is cold—the biting kind that starts in at the tips of your ears and goes in. It is late—and after trying to draw my head between my shoulders I bend forward and hurry on. The hobnailed shoes make a rhythmic sound on the pavement that carries like a bell into the clear night. A few people are still about, for life must go on, no matter what the circumstances.

On the left stands the Porta Nigra, massive structure of stone, erected as one of its outermost ramparts by the ancient military empire which at that time ruled the world, and has now long since gone its way. An American solider walks through the gate, a Frenchman in the familiar poilu blue comes the other way; they salute and pass. They are united by a mutual determination that a similar empire shall not again dominate the earth. Their meeting here is evidence of their success.

On the corner, more evidence, stands a military policeman in khaki—shivering and wondering if his relief will be on time. A youth, wearing a round cap without a visor, slouches by, looking cold and hungry.

I cross a bridge under which the rapidly flowing Moselle, as it has done for ages, is hurrying its waters down to the Rhine. In a few minutes I pass the guard and enter the Maximin Kaserne, where I am quartered—where my own father may have once been when he served his time under a spiked helmet.

Strange how fate places us on the checkerboard of life.

HENRY A. RITTER,
Cpl., Adv. G.H.Q.

MOTHER'S OUTFIT

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

I would thank you very much if you would inform me through your paper if it is forbiden for a mother to wear the insignia of the Army of Occupation on her arm to show that she has a son in the Army of Occupation; if it is not worn according to regulation.

W. C. S.

[Unless your father happens to be in the War Department, there is no one in that otherwise powerful institution who has any business to pass on what your mother shall or shall not wear.—EDITOR.]

SOUNDS FAIR ENOUGH

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

If any man in the A.E.F., having been transferred or sent to a hospital at any time, has never sent his forwarding address to his old organization, he would do well to do so at once. It would help him to get his letters and help us to get rid of them.

4TH DIVISION MAIL CLERK.

OH, WE'RE GENEROUS!

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

I read in your last issue what a hard time you boys had getting your paper started and putting it on its feet financially, so I thought you'd be glad to know that we fellows in the A.E.F. sure appreciate your efforts in our behalf.

Take in the single matter of candy, chocolate, cigarettes, cigars and jam, etc., which through the Q.M., the Y.M.C.A., and the Red Cross, you furnish us every week in the columns of THE STARS AND STRIPES. For instance, week before last you gave us, if I remember correctly, 4,500,000 pounds of candy (mostly stick candy and lemon drops, because soldiers seem to prefer that kind), 6,500,000 bars of chocolate, 60,500,000 cigarettes; and 1,500,000 pounds of jam, to say nothing of cigars and chewing gum. Of this great total for the whole A.E.F., my share for that week may be obtained by using 2,000,000 (the approximate number of members in the A.E.F.) as a division and allowing fractional parts of a million, the 500,000's, say, to be distributed, in addition, among the hard-working boys of the S.O.S. and the R.T.O.

By simple arithmetic, then, you will see that in one week alone I am indebted to THE STARS AND STRIPES for two pound boxes of candy, three bars (5-cent size, of course) of chocolate, three packages of cigarettes, and a one-half-pound can of jam.

For some reason, since I have been over here in France, I've had an awful craving for sweet stuff, but generally when I went into a store to buy some, the only kind I could get was that stuff the French call "chocolate finish." I like "THE STARS AND STRIPES brand" fine; it's lots better, although the last I had tasted a little of printers' ink. I didn't care so much for your lemon drops; they were made extra sour to suit the doughboys' taste, and I like mine sweet. To use a French phrase, "toot sweet."

It's a peculiar thing, though; some fellows are never satisfied. One of the fellows in our outfit complains that he didn't get enough, although he had as much stuff last week as I did. He thinks you ought to print those figures about the issue of candy and cigarettes, etc., to the A.E.F. in the same column as the pancake-baking contest, or else, if it wouldn't stir up more boxing bouts between chaplains, to change the name of your paper to the Christian Science Weekly.

However, you know, some guys will crab, no matter how much you do for them, especially if they see the men in the S.O.S., who really deserve it, getting more than they do. But I've got a better way, I think, of adjusting this little difficulty than either of the above. THE STARS AND STRIPES is at present a weekly. Now, why not make it a bi-weekly? You could then put the figures on the A.E.F.'s issue of candy, chocolate, cigarettes, cigars, jam, etc., twice a week instead of only once. The regular issues of those little extras, so unnecessary, but so dear to the members of the A.E.F., would thus be doubled, and everybody would be satisfied. Voila, Messieurs!

R. R. HOWN,
Cpl., Co. E, 316th Field Sig. Bn.

THANKS, LOOT

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

Before leaving France I want to say "Good-bye and good luck" to THE STARS AND STRIPES.

This seems only quite natural. Your little paper is something human; something one can shake hands with, slap on the back, borrow five francs from and offer to buy the drinks for.

And, strangely enough, this comes from a

2ND LOOT.

DEFENDU

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

Yesterday I saw a man wearing a divisional insignia on his sleeve and a small Army insignia on his overseas. Is this regulation?

INQUIRER.

[Decidedly not. No man can serve two masters.—EDITOR.]

MISDEAL

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

Speaking of dog-tag poker, how's my hand: 753,577.

CORLENZ.